

# Puget Sound Air Toxics

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## **Abstract**

The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency conducted a study in 2002 in an effort to better understand the potential health risks to our three million residents from a group of air contaminants commonly referred to as air toxics. The study was intended to assist the agency in improving its air toxics regulations and voluntary programs and to provide more information for allocating resources. The study uses basic risk assessment concepts and models, such as toxicity and exposure assessment, to provide a general overview of the potential health impacts that could be due to air toxics. Because of limited resources, the authors did not perform comprehensive risk assessments, but used risk characterization techniques to estimate the relative impact of the evaluated toxic air pollutants. The primary health effect of concern from the chemicals evaluated in the study was cancer. The majority of the cancer risk estimated in the study is due to diesel soot. On average, diesel soot was estimated to account for 70 to 85 percent of the total cancer risk from air toxics in our area.